

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CAPE T 00141 121051Z

43

ACTION AF-06

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FM AMEMBASSY CAPE TOWN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4943

INFO AMCONSUL DURBAN

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

UNCLAS CAPE TOWN 0141

E.O.11652:N/A

TAGS: SF, SOCI

SUBJ: SOME HOTELS GO MULTIRACIAL, SORT OF

REFS: 75 PRETORIA A-162, 75 CAPE TOWN 648 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY: SIXTEEN SOUTH AFRICAN HOTELE HAVE BEEN GRANTED 'INTERNATIONAL' STATUS UNDER TERMS OF LEGISLATION PASSED IN MID-1974. NEW STATUS WILL OPEN MOST FACILITIES OF THESE HOTELS TO SOUTH AFRICAN BLACKS. RESTRICTIONS ON USE OF HOTEL BARS, DANCE FLOORS AND SWIMMING POOLS REMAIN. END SUMMARY.

2. MINJUSTICE KRUGER ANNOUNCED FEB 6 THAT 16 SOUTH AFRICAN HOTELS HAVE BEEN GRANTED 'INTERNATIONAL STATUS' BY NATIONAL LIQUOR BOARD. NEW STATUS ALLOWS HOTELS TO OFFER ACCOMODATIONS AND OTHER FACILITIES TO SOUTH AFRICAN BLACKS WITHOUT RECEIVING PRIOR CASE-BY-CASE PERMISSION FROM GOVERNMENT AUTHORITIES. SIXTEEN HOTELS WILL NOT BE UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 CAPE T 00141 121051Z

ENTIRELY OPEN, HOWEVER. AMONG REMAINING RESTRICTIONS

ARE THAT MEN-ONLY BARS WILL BE FOR WHITES ONLY, ONLY HOTEL RESIDENTS, AND NOT OUTSIDERS, WILL BE ALLOWED TO USE HOTEL SWIMMINGPOOLS AND THAT BLACKS MAY NOT USE DANCE FLOORS. ETRICTURES DO NOT APPLY TO FOREIGN BLACK TOURISTS, WHO UNDER TERMS OF SAME LEGISLATION CAN USE FACILITIES OF ALL SOUTH AFRICAN HOTELS. ENGLISH-LANGUAGE PRESS AND OPPOSITION CHIDED GOVERNMENT FOR MAINTAINING RESTRICTIONS. KRUGER HAS RESPONDED THAT SAG'S DESIRE IS TO AVOID 'RACIAL FRICTION' WHICH MIGHT DEVELOP IN 'SENSITIVE' AREAS OF BAR ROOM, DANCE FLOOR AND SWIMMING POOL.

3. OVER THIRTY HOTELS APPLIED FOR INTERNATIONAL STATUS. APPARENTLY SOME HAVE BEEN REFUSED OUTRIGHT SUCH AS THE UNION HOTEL IN PRETORIA WHICH IS PARTLY OWNED BY HELEN SUZMAN. OTHER HOTELS HAVE RECEIVED NO OFFICIAL REPLY INCLUDING THE PRESTIGIOUS CARLTON IN JOHANNESBURG. INDICATIONS ARE THAT BUREAUCRATIC SNAGS HAVE SLOWED DOWN PROCESS AND THAT NEW STATUS WILL SOON BE GRANTED TO CARLTON AND A FEW OTHER HOTELS IN DURBAN, EAST LONDON AND PORT ELIZABETH, CITIES WHICH HAVE NO INTERNATIONAL HOTELS AS YEY. TOTAL NUMBER, HOWEVER, IS NOT EXPECTED TO INCREASE MARKEDLY. HOTELS WHICH HAVE NOT YET BEEN GIVEN INTERNATIONAL STATUS MAY STILL PROVIDE ACCOMODATIONS FOR DOMESTIC BLACKS, BUT WILL HAVE TO CONTINUE TO SEEK PRIOR APPROVAL IN EACH INSTANCE FROM LIQUOR BOARD.

4. SIXTEEN HOTELS ARE THE FOLLOWING: IN CAPE TOWN: CLARIDGES, METROPOLE, HEERENGRACHT AND MOUNT NELSON; IN JOHANNESBURG: LANDROST, CREST, PRESIDENT, MILPARK HOLIDAY INN; IN BLOEMFONTEIN: PRESIDENT AND BLOEMFONTEIN; IN PRETORIA: BOULEVARD AND BURGERS PARK; IN KEMPTON PARK: JAN SMUTS HOLIDAY INN, SOUTHERN SUN AIRPORT HOTEL; IN PIETERSBURG (NEAR LEBOWA CAPITAL): HOLIDAY INN; IN MAFEKING(NEAR BOPHUTHATSWANA CAPITAL): CREWES.

5. COMMENT: LIMITED NUMBER OF HOTELS APPROVED FOR INTERNATIONAL STATUS AND RESTRICTIONS PLACED ON THEM INDEED DO CONSTITUTE, AS SOME OPPOSITION MEMBERS AND MANY BLACKS HAVE ASSERTED, A 'TIMID AND INADEQUATE' STEP AWAY FROM DISCRIMINATION. NEVERTHELESS, IT IS A STEP
UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 03 CAPE T 00141 121051Z

AND IS WELCOME NO MATTER HOW SMALL IT MIGHT BE. THOUGH IN NO WAY SPEAKING TO FUNDAMENTAL ISSUES, MOVE WILL MAKE LIFE FOR SOME BLACKS, FINANCIALLT WELL-OFF ONES AT LEAST, MARGINALLY EARIER. WE WOULD EXPECT THAT IN LARGE URBAN CENTERS, FOR INSTANCE, INTERNATIONAL HOTEL DINING ROOM WILL COME TO BE FREQUENTED BY BLACK BUSINESSMEN AND OTHERS WHO UNTIL NOW HAVE BEEN CONFINED TO A SMALL NUMBER OF USUALLY INADEQUATE RESTAURANTS IN BLACK AREAS.

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